

wage requirements for federal contracts. Throughout the appropriations process for the upcoming fiscal year, I have voted against other similar amendments that seek to give federal contractors the ability to undercut the local wage levels on contracts valued at more than \$2,000.

The Davis-Bacon Act has been law since 1930, and simply requires that federal contractors, performing work for the government valued at more than \$2,000, must be paid at least the local prevailing wage and fringe benefits in the area. This ensures that any workers that are working on a federal contract receive the same compensation as the work done by their neighbors. In a time of great economic difficulty and uncertainty for so many working families in our country, I will staunchly oppose efforts to undermine or weaken common-sense protections like those put in place by the Davis-Bacon Act.

RECOGNIZING THE NEW YORK STATE SISTER CITIES CONFERENCE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 15, 2011

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the New York State Sister Cities Conference being held today in Cheektowaga, New York.

For the first time in over a decade, New York State Sister Cities will be holding a conference to connect all interested parties to share their mutual visions and plans to continue to bring together community leaders and motivated citizens in an effort to improve their community and the world.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower created the organization in 1956 to develop international bonds between communities in the United States and abroad while working with ordinary citizens to build relationships that transcend politics and promote world peace. Sister Cities now represents more than 700 US communities and nearly 2,500 partnerships with sister communities in 134 nations.

Sister Cities International is a leader for local community development and volunteer action. It fosters the development of partnerships between municipalities in the United States and similar jurisdictions in other nations. These long-term friendships allow citizens to experience and explore other cultures, implement and strengthen economic and community development, and stimulate environments through which communities collaboratively solve problems through reciprocal cultural, educational, municipal, business, professional, and technical exchanges.

This conference will give citizens the opportunity to network, share proven practices, and discuss recent trends in diplomacy leaving everyone prepared to connect communities and strengthen partnerships worldwide.

The mission of this program is to promote peace through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation—one individual, one community at a time. And never has there been a time when organizations like Sister Cities have been more vital to promoting peace, cooperation, and the ideal of the United States than there has been now.

My district benefits tremendously through Sister Cities' partnerships with communities in nations such as Ghana, China, Germany, Israel, and Poland. I fully support the efforts of this beneficial program to continue to promote transparency between communities and cultures.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride I stand today to recognize the 2011 New York State Sister Cities Conference. I also call upon my colleagues to join me in applauding the great work that it is doing every day.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JEFF FLAKE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 15, 2011

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 573, I mistakenly voted nay instead of yea. It had been my intention to support final passage of H.R. 2018, the Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act of 2011. While I am aware that a vote may not be changed after a rollcall vote has been closed, I would like the Record to reflect this error and to reiterate my support for H.R. 2018.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF PAUL H. PROTZENKO

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 15, 2011

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to honor Paul H. Protzenko of Enfield, Connecticut. Paul was killed on July 9, 2011, when his vehicle was attacked by small arms fire in Afghanistan, where he was training local officers on crime scene investigation techniques and police tactics.

Born in Agawam, Massachusetts, Paul had been a proud resident of Enfield of many years. Paul served as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army for 6 years and went on to serve for 22 years as a Connecticut State Trooper First Class. After retiring from the force in 2009, Paul selflessly decided to serve his country in Afghanistan by employing his talents and expertise in law enforcement to help local officers protect their communities and take charge of their future.

Paul's life can only be described as a life of service to others. His passionate love for his country and community afforded him two lifesaving medals as a trooper and an additional medal while serving in the military.

In Enfield, Paul was a communicant of St. Adalbert Church. Outside of his professional life, he stayed active as an avid martial artist, marksman, and skier. Neighbors and friends remember Paul as a standout figure in the community who—whether in uniform or not—always sought to keep the people around him safe.

Above all, he was devoted to his family. Paul will be deeply missed by his wife, Lyse; his three children Jennifer, Anthony, and Matthew; his parents; and his grandchildren. We must always remember those who dedicate their lives to serving this great country. Paul

made the ultimate sacrifice for us and we will always remember and honor him for it. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, his neighbors, and his brothers on the state police force. I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning the loss and honoring the life of this courageous man, Paul H. Protzenko.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 11, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2354) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Chair, I rise today in opposition of the McClintock amendment to H.R. 2354, the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2012.

This amendment would eliminate regional economic development commissions, and I believe that it comes at exactly the wrong time for thousands of communities throughout the United States.

Regional development commissions have a successful track record of spurring much needed investment into the economic development of distressed communities. They should be preserved and expanded, not eliminated.

One of these commissions directly contributes to the economy in my home State of Maine. The Northern Border Regional Commission, NBRC, is charged with investing in the economic development of the most distressed areas of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and northern New York.

By working directly with each state and existing economic development districts, the NBRC is in a unique position to address our region's shared challenges and obstacles in a coordinated way that cuts across state lines.

Since fiscal year 2010, the NBRC has been funded at \$1.5 million. Despite these limited resources, it has already awarded \$1.3 million to meaningful projects throughout the region.

For example, last September, the NBRC made its first investments in Maine, including an expansion of the Port of Eastport, which is part of a project that will result in the retention of 18 jobs and the creation of 26 new ones.

The NBRC is now preparing to accept applications for a second round of projects, which will spur additional investment and job creation through our region.

If Congress eliminates funding for the NBRC, it cannot build on the progress that has already been made. The NBRC and other commissions like it would not be able to continue their mission of creating and protecting job opportunities in some of the most economically disadvantaged parts of our country.

Madam Chair, during tough economic times it is unacceptable to shut down these commissions, which share a common mission of partnering with states and local communities to create jobs and further economic development.